

Attitudes about Inclusion: Through the Lens of Practitioners and Novices

Janet R. DeSimone, Nancy S. Maldonado, & M. Victoria Rodriguez
Lehman College
The City University of New York

The purpose of this study was to examine the attitudes of preservice and inservice education students, towards inclusion in school settings. Graduate students working on their New York State teacher certification in early childhood special education (n= 152) completed a survey, *Attitudes Toward Inclusion*. The survey addressed the following: attitudes towards various disabilities; perceptions of preparedness to modify instruction for students with disabilities and to meet their needs; willingness to include students with more severe disabilities in their classrooms; placement issues; and impact on general education students. The findings revealed three major themes: 1) inclusion for some students with special needs, as long as their disabilities are not severe; 2) social and learning benefits of inclusion; and 3) successful inclusion requires leadership and support. Recommendations for teacher preparation and program implementation are provided.

Keywords: early childhood, special education, teacher attitudes, inclusion